THE REGENCY OF MARY OF GUISE

BY

LORAINE BEATRICE PABST

B.S. in Ed., Eastern Illinois State College, 1945
A.M., University of Illinois, 1948

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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The author also wishes to express her appreciation to the librarians of the University of Illinois for their aid in locating materials for this study. She feels deeply grateful to the libraries of the Universities of Michigan, Texas, and Chicago for their courtesy in loaning materials essential to this study.

R. UNIV. BIBLIOTHEEK LEIDEN

THE REGENCY OF MARY OF GUISE

Mary of Guise has become one of the forgotten women of history. Her fame has been overshadowed by that of her daughter, Mary, Queen of Scots. Yet Mary of Guise had talent and ability for good rule. If her task had been less arduous, she might have become one of Scotland's most noted Regents. Previous studies of this historical personage have given a general sketch of her life. The aim of this study is twofold. First to present Mary of Guise as Regent of Scotland against a background of contemporary European events. Second to provide a glimpse of the Lords of the Congregation and the reasons behind their strife with their Regent.

This able woman was born about 1515 at Joinville, the estate of her father, the aspiring young nobleman, Claude, Duke of Guise. Young Mary was reared on her father's estates and, as was customary, spent some time at the French royal court. At the age of nineteen she was wed to Louis, Duke of Longueville. This marriage was of short duration, for the young nobleman died four years later.

As an eligible young widow of good family, Mary became the pawn with which Francis I sought a desirable alliance for France. Both Henry VIII of England and James V of Scotland were suitors for her hand. In this contest Henry VIII was worsted by his younger nephew, James V, for France wished to continue its traditional Scottish alliance. So Mary of Guise journeyed to Scotland, became the bride of James V, and Queen of Scotland.

Here she found herself in a rude, barbarous, lawless country where nobles held great power and had scant respect for royal authority. During the lifetime of James V she took no active part in public affairs. This was changed by the untimely death of her young husband a few days after the battle of Solway Moss. Mary of Guise was left a widow with an infant daughter.

Now the young woman was thrust into the current of Scottish affairs. The Scottish Estates selected James Hamilton, Earl of Arran as the Scottish regent. Soon the question of a marriage alliance arose, for sixteenth century Europe was unaccustomed to queens and felt that a queen must rule jointly with her husband. There were several candidates for the hand of Mary Stuart. Arran hoped that his son might wed the Queen of Scots. Henry VIII had similar aspirations for his son, the future Edward VI. By making such an alliance Henry VIII might be able to annex Scotland and thus remove a threat to the security of his realm. For whenever England was involved in conflict with France, the northern English countries were apt to be invaded by the Scots.

At first it seemed he might succeed. A special delegate, Sir Ralph Sadler, was sent to scotland to negotiate a treaty of alliance. Mary of Guise, as well as Arran, pretended to favor this proposal. Scottish ambassadors were sent to England to discuss the terms of the proposed alliance. The nobles, who had been captured at Solway Moss, returned to their homes and agreed to further the English cause. Upon their arrival they found the Scots opposed to any English alliance. Hence they hedged for a time. Eventually Henry VIII lost patience with their hesitation and seized several Scottish ships. The Scots, aroused by this hostile act, refused to ratify the English alliance, and signed a treaty with France.

Goaded by what he regarded as Scottish perversity and bad faith, Henry VIII ordered an attack on Scotland. Any chance of success was thwarted in 1545 by his intervention in the continental struggles of Charles V and Francis I. At this time his ally Charles V deserted him and the English monarch was faced with the problem of strengthening his own country against invasion. In the following year Henry VIII died. His Scottish policy was continued by his successor, the Duke of Somerset, the new English regent.

This time England found stiffer opposition in Scotland, for that country was being given more French aid. French policy had changed with the death of Francis I. The new king,

Henry II, was friendly toward the Guise family and believed that it was good policy to help Scotland. Henry II was a very ambitious monarch who dreamed of annexing Scotland, Ireland, and perhaps even England to his kingdom. As a youth he was held captive by Charles V and tried to checkmate that monarch whenever possible. The new French king, too, thought in terms of marriage alliances. He hoped to secure young Mary, Queen of Scots, as a bride for his son, the future Francis II. To this end a treaty was signed between France and Scotland. The Scots agreed to send their youthful Queen to France to be educated. The French agreed to furnish military aid to Scotland. Thus French help turned the tide in favor of Scotland. The English were forced to withdraw and soon found themselves occupied with their own affairs.

In Scotland there was a lull during which Mary of Guise, with some of the leading nobles, journeyed to France. Her purpose was twofold: to see her daughter, and to discuss Scotland's future.

Upon her return from France Mary of Guise sought the regency of Scotland in earnest. Previously, during the troubled days of the English invasion, a faction of the Scottish Lords sided with her and planned to make her regent. These plans proved to be premature but Mary of Guise moved one step closer to her goal, for she was appointed to the council and the Governor could not act without her advice.

After her return from France, she journeyed with Arran to northern Scotland to hold "justice aires." Here she found opportunity to speak with the Lords and to win their support.

One thing remained to be done if she were to become regent of Scotland in a legal manner. Her daughter must be declared of age, for the Scots had a law that a girl attained her majority at twelve years of age. This question was brought before the Parlement of Paris. This court decided that the young queen might rule in her own right at eleven years of age, since queens were special persons, endowed with wisdom above that of ordinary mortals. Thus Mary, Queen of Scots, was held to

have reached her majority. She was permitted to choose two curators who would advise her on the choice of a regent. This was done and she appointed her mother to this office.

Arran was compensated for his loss of the regency by being granted the duchy of Châtelherault and was given the command of Dumbarton, a strategic fortress in western Scotland. This latter privilege was given for a nineteen year period on the condition that Arran would remain loyal and obedient to the new Regent.

Mary of Guise assumed her new duties in April, 1554. Immediately she redistributed Scottish offices. Arran's supporters were replaced by other Scotsmen whom she believed to be better qualified for their posts. Frenchmen who served as able administrators of her French estates also received positions in the new Scottish government.

She attacked her numerous problems with energy. The establishment of justice was perhaps the greatest of these. Both in the Highlands and on the Borders lawlessness was rampant. The able new Regent issued commissions for the arrest of criminals in the Highlands. Among the powerful Lords who received such commissions were Huntly, Sutherland, and Argyle. When Huntly failed to do his duty he was brought to trial and imprisoned for a time. No Scot, whether of high or of low degree, was to be above the law.

To bring more law and order to Scotland, Mary of Guise spent her summers journeying to these regions, and holding circuit courts there. A statement of her itinerary will serve to show the magnitude of her task. For example, in April, 1554 she was at Edinburgh. After opening Parliament in June she went to Jedburgh. August found her at Dumbarton, in September she was at Stirling, in November at Falkland, and in December at Edinburgh once more. Winters were usually spent at Edinburgh or Stirling. In 1556 she visited the north including Inverness, Elgin, and Forbes.

An outgrowth of these activities was her attempt to deal with the English border wardens, Lord Dacre, and later

Wharton. Border disputes, which were preventing peaceful relations between the two countries, concerned such matters as extradition of fugitives, both rebels and criminals, ill treatment of merchants who were forced to land in the opposite country, failure to honor safe conducts of merchants and other travelers, and the wardens' neglect of their duties.

More success attended her efforts to govern the cities. Here there was rivalry between the merchants and the craftsmen. The merchants used their influence to push through Parliament legislation which the craftsmen believed was detrimental to them. Yet Mary of Guise defended the rights of craftsmen several times. Such cooperation was not all one sided however for on occasion the craftsmen used their influence to see that her nominees were elected to office.

She had less success with defense measures. Mary of Guise hoped to establish a more efficient defense system for Scotland. The cities made some preparation to defend themselves. Levies were raised for this purpose. Weapon showings were held. These were musters of a local nature at which all men, eligible for military service, were to appear fully equipped for their task. The Regent directed that the goods of all Lords, clergy, and citizens be inventoried. Again the cities responded to her request but the Lords did not. After a meeting at the Abbey of Holyrood, the nobility sent representatives to her. They protested that if the Regent used the information obtained from these inventories for taxation purposes, and hired mercenary troops with money thus secured, the nobility would become idle and unused to bearing arms in defense of their country. Upon learning of their objections, the Regent diplomatically withdrew the inventory system.

The church posed another problem for Mary of Guise. It no longer commanded the reverence of a majority of the populace. To improve this institution John Hamilton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, convened a council in 1559. Mary of Guise presented a petition of the Lords to this council. This requested that the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Com-

munion be administered in the vernacular, that public and private prayer meetings also be held in their native tongue, and that the Scriptures be interpreted by a qualified person at these meetings. Final decision on these matters was left to the church council by the Regent. Mary of Guise was unable to accomplish much in this matter because her power was limited. In order to fill church offices for example, she was required to act through her daughter. Thus Mary of Guise's candidate might not receive the post.

Scottish foreign policy during the regency was influenced by that of France. During the first three years of her rule, Mary of Guise succeeded in keeping peace with England. In addition to the ever present border disputes, the Irish question was a hindrance to peace. Scottish nobles, as the Earl of Argyle, wished to extend their rule by invading northern Ireland. When the English government complained of his aggressive activities, Mary of Guise ordered him to return to Scotland.

At length in 1557 Scotland became involved in war with England. It consisted mainly of a series of border raids. Since Mary of Guise had no standing army she was forced to rely on occasional musters of the Lords and their tenants. At times members of this army failed to appear on the appointed day. When she wished to invade England in retaliation for raids against the Scots, the Lords refused to do so for two reasons. First, their queen was absent from the country. Second, Scotland and England, the Lords claimed, were nominally at peace. Consequently the Regent was forced to abandon her plan.

At length when a Spanish Ambassador arrived favoring peace, Mary of Guise began negotiations with the English. Then followed a discouraging period of intermittent peace talks and more raids. Ten meetings were held and nothing was accomplished. When a treaty between the two countries was drawn up more delays ensued in its ratification as the English insisted that Mary, Queen of Scots, and not the Regent ratify it.

Relations of Scotland with France were as cordial as Anglo-Scottish relations were hostile for it was in this period that Mary, Queen of Scots, was married to the French dauphin.

The last problem which Mary of Guise faced was that of the revolt of the Lords of the Congregation, as the nobles who sympathized with Protestantism called themselves. There were various motives for their rebellion. Among these were religious causes, sympathy toward England, and dissatisfaction with the government of Mary of Guise. They were also influenced by the teachings of John Knox. Through his Calvinistic teachings they were becoming aware of their importance in Scottish society. The theory that it was the duty of the sovereign to reform the church and that if the monarch neglected this obligation the Lords must undertake it, tended to enhance their power and so they readily accepted these teachings. Furthermore Scotland, in common with other countries, was struggling through a period of hard times. The government in power was blamed for these economic difficulties.

Such was their discontent that the slightest incident could stir these nobles to revolt. This was furnished by an Easter proclamation issued by the Regent in 1559. At this time the third church council of the decade had ended its meeting and Mary of Guise directed, by means of proclamation, that Easter be observed in the traditional manner. Some Protestant preachers ignored this command and were cited to appear at Stirling and there to answer for their conduct. They responded, and started on their journey with many of their friends. Mary of Guise learned of this, and alarmed lest trouble begin, she sent a messenger to them requesting that they return to their homes. When they complied they were outlawed for their non-appearance at Stirling. This infuriated the Scottish Protestants and riots occurred at Perth.

Mary of Guise acted immediately. She ordered a muster to convene at Stirling and to march against the rebels. The insurgents prepared for battle. Open warfare was averted for the moment by the Agreement of Perth, a timely compromise

on the part of the Regent. It was agreed that the status quo, in religious matters, be maintained until Parliament met in January. Peace prevailed until June when the Lords met at St. Andrews, avowedly to discuss religious matters. The Regent held this to be a violation of the Perth Agreement and directed an army to march against them. Upon her return she found the gates of Edinburgh closed to her and was forced to retire to the fortress of Dunbar until July.

Peace prevailed until autumn when the insurgent Lords organized an extra legal government of their own, issued proclamations stating their grievances, and at length deposed the Regent. Mary of Guise ignored their acts and remained in office.

In the meantime she was not idle. She wrote to France requesting more aid, invited Lennox, a rival of Châtelherault, into the country, and urged him to take measures to regain possession of his estates, and sought to discredit Châtelherault with the Lords by forging a letter, and sending it to the French ambassador at London. This letter represented the former governor as seeking a pardon for his rebellion against the rightful Scottish government.

In January a French captain, Martiques, arrived with aid for the Regent. While he was being suitably entertained at Edinburgh his ships and supplies were seized by a member of the Congregation. The Regent's ill fortune continued, for she soon received word that a fleet, commanded by her brother, D'Elboeuf, was scattered by storm and that several months would be required to equip another.

To add to her difficulties the rebel Lords received English aid. At the close of February, the Treaty of Berwick was signed by the Scottish Lords and the English government. By it the English agreed to help the Scots to free themselves from French domination.

Meanwhile the French sent the Bishop of Valence to mediate with the Scots. Upon his arrival there followed parleys

with the Lords. Success in these negotiations was blocked by the insistence of the insurgent nobles that French garrisons be withdrawn from Scotland and that Leith, which the Regent had fortified for her protection, be evacuated. The Regent, in turn, demanded that the Lords end their English alliance. Since neither side was willing to make concessions, no agreement was reached. So the tedious negotiations dragged on until the death of Mary of Guise on June 10, 1560.

The concluding chapter in this study is concerned with Mary of Guise - the Woman. It attempts to portray the Scottish Regent as a person and includes an evaluation of her program.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

State papers and records both French and English, constitute the most important source for a study of the Regency of Mary of Guise. Among these Mary of Guise's English Letters as contained in the *Privy Council Records Addenda* were very helpful. Also valuable for the light it sheds upon her character are the *Memoirs François De Lorraine.* This volume contains letters written by her to her brother, Francis, Duke of Guise. City records as the *Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh* have been useful in furnishing a glimpse of Scottish city life at this period. The collection of *Reports* issued by the Historical Manuscripts Commission has been of aid in this study for it contains letters written by Mary of Guise to the various Scottish Lords. *The Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer* serve to supplement the other sources.

VITA

Loraine Beatrice Pabst was born in Hamilton, Ohio On January 27, 1920. After graduating from Hamilton High School in 1938, she was a correspondence student with Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hays, Kansas. Following this she attended Eastern Illionis State Teachers College, Charleston, Illinois. In 1945 she was graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. She was employed in the Beckemeyer High School, Beckemeyer, Illinois. During the year 1947 she began graduate study at the University of Illinois and in 1948 received the degree of Master of Arts in History. She received the Babcock Fellowship in History for the year 1949-1950. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta and Kappa Delta Pi.